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ADDRESS

OF THE

REV. ABBÉ J. C. K. LAFLAMME, M.A., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF LAVAL UNIVERSITY,

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA,

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

HELD AT QUEEN'S HALL, MONTREAL,

WEDNESDAY, 27TH MAY, 1891.

TRANSLATED BY

WILLIAM KINGSFORD, LL.D., F.R.S. [CANADA].

Ergo alte vestiga oculis et rite repertum
Carpe manu ;

Æn. vi. 145.

TORONTO :

ROWSELL & HUTCHISON.

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THE LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON, G.C.B.,

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HONORARY PRESIDENT AND PATRON,

ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA.

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As every publication should have its *raison d'être*, I am impelled to offer a few words of explanation of the circumstances under which this translation has been made.

At the public meeting of the Royal Society held in Montreal by the invitation of the city, on Wednesday the 27th May, at the Queen's Hall, I was unfortunately so placed that I only imperfectly heard Dr. Laflamme. The members of the society were grouped upon the stage as the French say *pour figurer*. The president, Dr. Grant, in the centre: His Excellency Lord Stanley on the right, Sir Donald Smith on his left. My own place was in the second row, beside M. l'Abbé Verreault in the left hand corner; the consequence was that much of the paper escaped me. What I did hear awoke my attention and sympathy. Enjoying at the time the hospitality of the Abbé Verreault at the Normal School, with Monsignor Hamel and Dr. Laflamme, I was constantly meeting these distinguished men and I took advantage of the relationship to ask Dr. Laflamme to allow me to peruse his MS. Making some unnecessary apology for his caligraphy, he was good enough to place it in my hands. I was so impressed with its importance that I offered to translate it.

After some hesitation Dr. Laflamme acceded to my request. At this stage of the proceeding I felt it proper to submit the matter to the president, Dr. Grant, of Queen's University. Seated at the meeting in question in a better position than myself, he was able to follow the whole argument; there was consequently no

necessity to place the paper in his hands. Dr. Grant was good enough warmly to approve the course I suggested, adding that he would be highly gratified by seeing the paper published in English : it represented his own opinions, and he was sure that much good would be attained by bringing the matter to public notice.

Accordingly I accepted the duty with a full sense of the care it would exact. To my mind, translation is not the simple exercise, which many with a superficial knowledge of a foreign language not unfrequently think it to be. There is a delicacy of idiom and a nicety of expression, which require something more than the aid of a dictionary to attain. The proofs of the translation accordingly have been submitted to Dr. Laflamme, who, I take upon myself to say, has found nothing to condemn in them.

I have appended my signature to my work to shew that I heartily sympathize with the teaching of the address, and that I accept the responsibility of the English version.

THE TRANSLATOR.

127 Stewart Street,

OTTAWA,

12th June, 1891.

*Your Excellency, Mr. President, my esteemed colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen :*

The Royal Society is not at this date the owner of a building, its own property ; it is not in possession of a chamber where its meetings may be held ; indeed, the society labours under the inconvenience of not knowing where to place the volumes of its memoirs, together with the several important works annually obtained as exchanges, or which otherwise come into its possession. This poverty of condition, in the view of some few, may possibly be looked upon as not without benefit ; but it does not the less create perplexity, which cannot indefinitely continue: and the Society cherishes the hope, that from some quarter it may meet a generous Mæcenæ, who may provide for it not great wealth, but a decent place of refuge ; a building in which the Society may hold its annual meetings, receive its friends, and exhibit for the general advantage the treasures which are accumulating in its archives.

Who can tell, if this desire of somewhere obtaining a resting place did not in a certain degree contribute to the acceptance of the invitation of last year, so kindly made by the Natural History Society of Montreal, to proceed to the commercial metropolis of Canada and there hold its annual meeting of 1891 ?

During the last few years, Montreal has so largely contributed to the grand cause of superior education that our society may exclaim to this city, that if in European diplomacy enlightenment has on occasions proceeded from the north, generosity of endowment in our country appears to have flowed from the same direction.

It may be said of our own society, that after ten years of existence, it remains still young ; and that without having the

head as flighty as that of the tortoise in the fable of La Fontaine*, it may be looked for, that from time to time there will arise the désiré of seeing the world where the society has its being: the different parts of Canada. That world for which it labours, which it desires above all to aid in enlightenment as to the measure of its strength.

*As this fable has its moral, I give a prose translation of it with the original text. To turn it into verse is a *tour de force* above my powers.

LA TORTUE ET LES DEUX CANARDS.

Une tortue était à la tête légère,
Qui, lasse de son trou, voulut voir le
pays.
Volontiers on fait cas d'une terre
étrangère ;

Volontiers gens boiteux haïssent le logis.

Deux canards, à qui la commère
Communica ce beau dessein,
Lui dirent qu'il avaient de quoi la
satisfaire.

Voyez-vous ce large chemin?
Nous vous voiturerons, par l'air, en
Amérique :

Vous verrez mainte république,
Maint royaume, maint peuple, et vous
profiterez

Des différentes mœurs que vous re-
marquerez.

Ulysse en fit autant. On ne s'atten-
dait guère

De voir Ulysse en cette affaire.
La tortue écouta la proposition.

Marché fait, les oiseaux forgent une
machine

Pour transporter la pèlerine.
Dans la gueule, en travers, on lui passe
un bâton.

Serrez bien, dirent-ils ; garder de
lâcher prise.

Puis chaque canard prend ce bâton par
un bout.

THE TORTOISE AND THE TWO DUCKS.

A tortoise, flighty in her nature, tired
of her lair, desired to see the world.
We readily attach value to foreign
lands, and those who are lame most
detest their homes. Two ducks to
whom the gossip communicated this
fine idea told her that they had the
means to carry it out. "Do you see
this wide roadway? We will bear you
through the air into America. You
will see many republics, many king-
doms, many peoples, and you will
profit by the difference of manners
which you will then observe. Ulysses
did all this." We little expected to
see Ulysses mixed up in the matter.

The tortoise entertained the pro-
position ; a bargain was made, and the
birds contrived a machine to transport
the pilgrim. They pass a stick across
her mouth. "Keep your teeth close,"
say they, "beware of letting the stick
go." Then each duck takes the stick
by an end. The tortoise is lifted on

I will not speak of extending our excursions beyond the domicile of the society, because we possess none, but of those made among our friends in the different cities of the Dominion from which we trust we will draw much profit. In the first place, in thus proceeding, the society claims to act in accordance with the theories of its founder, the Marquis of Lorne, who, from the commencement, expressed the wish that the general meetings should be successively held in the different cities of the Dominion; and in the second place, the society is actuated by the desire of making itself known. Will you pardon this thought of youthful vanity? I venture so to hope, when you shall have satisfied yourselves of the practical character and importance of its labours; you will then see that its members are conscientious workers, who do not stop short before any task, however severe it may prove, when there is a question of discovering the truth for its own sake, and to make it plain to others.

La tortue enlevée, on s'étonne partout
De voir aller en cette guise
L'animal lent et sa maison,
Justement au milieu de l'un et l'autre
oison.

Miracle ! criait-on : venez voir dans
les nues

Passer la reine des tortues.

La reine ! vraiment oui : je la suis en
effet.

Ne vous en moquez point. Elle eût
beaucoup mieux fait

De passer son chemin sans dire aucune
chose ;

Car lâchant le bâton en desserrant les
dents,

Elle tombe, elle crève aux pieds des
regardants.

Son indiscretion de sa perte fut cause.

Imprudence babil et sotte vanité

Et vaine curiosité,

Ont ensemble étroit parentage.

Ce sont enfants tous d'un lignage.

Book VI., III.

high. Everywhere is astonishment, at seeing the slow creature and her house pass along in this manner. "A Miracle !" cried the people,—“Come and see the queen of the tortoises pass among the clouds.” “The queen ! truly indeed ! I am so really. In no way make a jest of what you see,” she answered. She would have done better had she gone on her journey without saying anything. For on opening her teeth she lost her hold of the stick. She falls, and is dashed to pieces at the feet of the spectators. Her indiscretion caused her ruin.

Imprudence, tattle, foolish vanity, frivolous curiosity, have a close relationship : all children of the same lineage.

At the commencement of its existence, the Royal society placed this scientific propaganda at the foremost rank of its programme. At its first meeting, the different literary and scientific societies of Canada were invited to record their names on the list of affiliated memberships, and to report their labours at our formal meetings. At an early date it openly expressed the desire to give public recognition by diplomas or by prizes, when the means of the society so permitted, of the value of the special work performed by those Canadians, who had no place in any one of the four sections. From its foundation, our society has been faithful to this second part of its programme ; several works have received recognition [*couronnés*] and have thus obtained public, and so to speak official acknowledgment of their merit.

The Royal Society is a part of our time, of that time which has been called the age of intelligence. We will not, however, for the moment, accept the responsibility of a designation, possibly much too flattering for our period ; for the intelligence of our time has not yet thoroughly dispersed all the darkness about us, and the volume, which could be made of what we do not know, would be much more voluminous than that which would contain the whole extent of our knowledge. Pascal has already said that we did not know the whole of nothingness [*le tout de rien*], and this sad avowal of a great genius after two centuries of labour and discovery still remains true. The limitations of ignorance have been somewhat set back, and this is all. We can perfectly well understand M. A. Gaudry, the prince of French paleontologists, humbly saying after his classic researches on the excavations of Pikermi, that he was simply become a trifle less ignorant than the day previous.*

* Monsieur Albert Gaudry, member of the Institute of France and professor at the Museum of Natural History, has made on the excavations of Pikermi in Greece, a study which has been a revelation for the palæontology of the lost geological epochs Cf. "*Les ancêtres de nos animaux domestiques*," par A. Gaudry et le *Correspondant* du 25 Avril, 1891.

Thus the light which illumines our time is not without shadow. For that reason I consider that we would nearer approach the truth, in simply calling our age that of the labourer and investigator.

But in truth it is impossible to deny that never, in the domain of science alone, have we seen so many busy thinkers, so many marvellous discoveries accomplished in so little time. It is, as if a fever had suddenly affected the world of research ; and if the development of science continues with the same rapidity, it is absolutely impossible to foresee what in fifty years it may become.

I do not, however, desire to discuss the marvellous progress of human knowledge. There is another tendency of our time which equally deserves to attract the attention and to command the sympathies of all thinkers. I desire to speak of the sincere desire to promulgate, to popularize in all classes, intellectual knowledge. In the extended republic of letters, in this grand banquet of science, we wish that all may find admission, that no one be considered to be out of place : that recruits, whether they arrive from the palace or the cross-ways, be always welcome. And it is to be well understood, that the end in view is nothing so little, as the gratification of a foolish vanity by the display of personal talents. We hope rather, let us say, to infuse into all ranks of society without distinction, the knowledge to be acquired by those who will seek it, and thus to raise the intellectual level of the masses, to elevate their moral nature. Who can even tell? Possibly to make them more easily to be governed.

Let us at once declare this is not a shadowy Utopia. However upon the one condition : that we do not appeal simply to the intelligence, we must at the same time enlist the heart by the influence of morality based on solid religious principles, and endeavour to strengthen the judgment, by the precepts [*données*] of a righteous and enlightened philosophy.

It was somewhat with the view of instructing and raising

the moral of the people, that the revolutionary spirit of another age, a century ago, proclaimed the absolute equality of men. This chimerical view of equality urged with the utmost rigour has failed to stand the test of experience. Without doubt all men are equal before God, and before the law. I will even add that all men, that is to say all admitted to vote, possess equal political rights. But in other respects, there is ground to make distinctions ; and the principle of equality absolutely applied to human nature has never been, and never will be anything, but one of those dreams conceived by a brain attacked with frenzy, which, at best, is capable only of producing dupes. After all, against the principle of equality proclaimed by the men of '89 I give the preference to the new English theory, by far more sensible, which is satisfied with affirming that men are only equal after dinner.*

However there is a point on which we may desire to see a greater equality established than now exists, the realization of which to a certain extent is not impossible : that of education, the development of the intellectual faculties. Is it not to be desired that the inappreciable benefit of knowledge in the widened sense of the word, should be within the reach of all, that every intellect should possess the means of development to the limit of its power, and thus to extend to society a co-operation at once more enlightened and of more effect ? It is not to be doubted, that inequality of the intellect will always exist. But we may well ask ourselves, if it would not be preferable to see education so organized, that escaping from the heights of the universities, as from a source always abundant and pure, it would spread itself on all sides to cover the whole land with its fruitful waters. To this blessed fountain head all can proceed to drink from the stream of knowledge, as their strength will permit. Some may carry away possibly but a slight draft of its inspiration ; others will be more abundantly refreshed ; while all can drink as plentifully as desire suggests.

* Science No. 425, Vol. XVII.

Moreover we observe on the part of governments a very pronounced tendency to labour in this direction. Education is encouraged in every form. Not satisfied with giving a new impulsion to the elementary schools which come within reach of the humbler classes, night schools have been established for adults whose education in their early years has by circumstances been unfortunately obstructed. Special technological schools have been established at great expense ; more than ever the course of instruction of colleges and secondary schools is fostered and discussed. The studies of the universities themselves have become enlarged and more complete. In a word a general movement, in all respects marked by earnestness, has been commenced to establish in all classes of society, a more heightened level of intelligence. It is precisely this strength of feeling [*élan*] that we desire to see generalized and be more extended.

We may hope for wonderful results in this direction but on one condition, that the effort is made less to teach many things, than to inspire the students with a love of what is taught them. "I do not consider," said Mr. R. J. Moulton on a late occasion, "that a child has been taught to read, unless he has been made to like reading."

To inspire interest for the subject we teach, is to furnish life to education ; otherwise the effort, so to speak, is no more than a galvanic and fallacious emotion, which passes away so soon as the master and pupil are no longer side by side.

Why hesitate to avow under this point of view that our present system of education is not the most perfect ? Who are the pupils who on leaving college carry with them a true love for the authors which have been their study. On the contrary, is it not the general rule, that a sentiment of satisfaction is felt at the idea, that there is no longer any necessity to translate those classic pages, of which the difficulties to be overcome have always obtained prominence over the pleasure to be derived from them ?

Macaulay tells us of the farmers in Holland who after their

day's work, relieve their toilsome labours by reading Virgil's *Georgics* in the original.* Without giving offence in any quarter, the number among us is possibly sufficiently limited, I will not say of men engaged in agriculture, but among the professions, who would find more gratification in the text of an ode of Horace, an oration of Cicero or Demosthenes, than in the newspaper of the day or the last novel *à la mode*.

Any one who, in our system of education, will succeed in attaining the immense result of creating a love for the subjects learned at college, would deserve that the country should construct a statue to his memory, seeing that from this result he would have assured for the future the fruit of long years given to studies, the results of which are often unfortunately in a great part compromised, or completely lost.

While waiting for the discovery of this panacea, which when all is considered is not so difficult to find as the philosopher's stone, I will ask your permission to submit to you, in a few words, a special system of education designed for adults of all classes, which has already produced a marvellous effect in the dissemination of intellectual attainments. I desire to bring to your notice "University Extension," as it has been named in England, where it has been attempted for the first time. The results have been so encouraging on the other side of the Atlantic, that last year the University of Pennsylvania made a trial of the system at Philadelphia and in the neighbouring towns and villages, with a success which has exceeded all expectation.

Mr. Moulton defines "University Extension" as university education for the whole nation organized on a base of itinerant lectures.†

In order to carry this system into effect, it is by no means necessary that a university should be placed at its head. At

* Science, No. 425, Vol. XVII.

† A paper read by Mr. R. G. Moulton before the John Hopkins University, of Virginia. Bulletin No. I of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching.

London, a flourishing branch of this system is under the direction of a central committee, which although in itself in no way appertaining to the universities, is nevertheless in relationship with three universities. The point in question is simply to place within the reach of all, who will avail themselves of the opportunity, and who have but limited leisure, the advantages of study of the different branches of university education, according to the tastes of each person. Properly speaking it is the university of the working man and of those engaged in business.

Before proceeding further, it must be understood there is no desire to transform into *savants*, specialists, jurisconsults or men of letters, the porters, the men engaged in shops, the miners or craftsmen of ordinary life. But we desire to develop their intelligence, by bringing within their reach knowledge of a higher order. We desire to open out to these honest men the horizon of new enjoyments which will essentially prove morally elevating, and to raise up as much as possible, frequently in a manner to cause surprise, minds often as richly endowed and as naturally powerful, often even more so, than those of their teachers.

The system of University Extension works in this form. In the first instance a central committee is organized whose duty it is to receive applications for admission to the course, to obtain the necessary professors from the university, and to arrange for the payment of their salaries. Each course to extend over three months at a lesson the week, given always in the evening. The course includes four constituent parts. First the lecture itself, to occupy about one hour. The pupils or students are furnished with a summary of the whole course divided into twelve parts; an arrangement which does away with the necessity of taking notes. The summary of each lesson sets forth the authors to be read, and at the same time gives a certain number of exercises to be performed conceived both to test the memory of students and to habituate them to write a written essay on a given subject. These duties are

performed at home, the pupils having full liberty to consult and to refer to the authors who treat upon the subjects of their study. The completed essays are sent to the professors. It is in the class which generally follows the lesson that the professor in a familiar conversation with the students gives an account of the performance of their duties. It is evident, that this examination carefully given is yet more interesting and more useful than the first lesson itself. In this intimate association between the pupils and the professor the last shadows of mis-intelligence disappear, the last difficulties vanish, and the instruction given definitely reaches the point aimed at.

If it be asked where these lectures are to be delivered, the answer is that they will be given where they are asked for. Thus for example, let us suppose that this system of university extension is organized at Montreal, and Hochelaga asked for a course of applied mechanics, the central committee would send them a special professor. St. Henry might desire a course on the history of Canada, the itinerant professor of the history of Canada would be sent in this direction, and so on. Each locality would choose the subject or subjects it desired to study, and the special professor proceeds thither to perform the duty required.

The audience gathered together by these lectures is extremely mixed, much resembling the passengers in the car of a tramway, or the numbers which fill the churches. The delicate duty of the professor is to interest his entire auditory, and to be able to count upon at least some few pupils who are in earnest, who will work at the exercises after each lesson, and will thus carry away all the benefit attainable from the instruction given. A great number will do no more than be present at the lectures, and this attendance even will be highly profitable to them.

As to the exercises of the pupils, the variety of their character naturally will be very great. You will there find with the production of earnest natures, enlightened and thoroughly educated, the result of the labour of those scarcely

knowing how to write, completely confused as to orthography, in absolute revolt against the laws of grammar ; defects which in no way prove a hinderance to their reasoning with precision, and equally with the others drawing profit from the lessons of the professors. Some of these exercises have been so long that in one case the writer as a matter of prudence added an index of its contents. Another example was still more developed, but as its writer was living in a lunatic asylum its correction was not thought necessary.

In England the demand is generally made for courses of literature, history, and political economy, although pure and applied science obtains much popularity. In the United States, the exact sciences, theoretic or applied, are more in vogue, which indeed is more in conformity to the eminently practical nature of our neighbours. Curious to relate, nowhere in England or in the United States has the demand been made for a special course on the classics, although lectures upon the literature of Greece and Rome given in English have been sufficiently sought after.

The average number of pupils is very great. Last winter the University of Pennsylvania gave at Philadelphia, or in the adjacent towns, forty courses. The total number of those attending was 45,000 persons, the average attendance 9,500. At the close of each course of lectures the students are submitted to an examination, the result of which, in addition to that obtained from the weekly exercises, is recorded in a diploma which is awarded to them. The professors are unanimous in the declaration that these examinations are at least equal to ordinary university examinations. Thus the English universities under certain conditions give to the bearers of these certificates the title of S.A. [Affiliated Students], which extend special privileges to those who, hereafter would be able to take a complete university course.*

* According to Mr. Moulton. It is necessary that in the same city the lectures should be given on subjects previously set forth, and have a certain relationship during the space of three or four years. Thus, students who possess the diploma of S.A. can be directly admitted to the University of Cambridge as students of the second year.

The most delicate question of all remains : how payment of the salaries of the professors is to be made ? In the first place the salaries are not high. The professors of Cambridge receive forty-five pounds sterling for a course. This amount is partly obtained from the students themselves, who pay a weekly contribution varying from one to fifty cents. But as on the average, these sums will meet only two thirds of the expense, the remaining amount is furnished by public institutions, or rich and generous philanthropists.

There is a saying that a tree is known by its fruit, equally we must appreciate the value of this university education *ad extra* by the importance of its results. In the first place we can easily believe that in the centre of a population where these lectures are given, the tone of thought of the community must necessarily be changed. The guardians of the local libraries remark, that the volumes the most sought after are more sterling in character than those ordinarily required. There is less frivolity in the ordinary conversation of society. Even at five o'clock teas more serious subjects are discussed. Ladies find entertainment from the lectures at which they have been present,* to the great advantage, it would appear, of Christian charity. The intelligence of humanity is not divided into water-tight compartments, as the hulls of our vessels, and it is impossible to develope and elevate one faculty without other endowments being more or less impressed.

The advantages are not in a less degree for the universities themselves. By these means they make themselves known and appreciated. This intimate relationship with the body of the people places the professors in the position of rendering an account to themselves of a mass of things, of which without this experience, they would be ignorant their whole lives, and these labours obtain from it an impress of reality which will greatly add to their value.

During the middle ages the people proceeded to the universities, and the students had to be content with what was then given. In the system which we unfold it is the

universities which go to the people to extend to them the instruction, which at the same time will be the most agreeable and the most useful. Taking all in all, this system is of as much worth as that of former days.

But again, this form of education as in all other, will only obtain its full measure of success when placed in the hands of professors distinguished by their zeal. What we require in the teacher is that spark of fire by which missionaries are animated. And after all the mission to instruct the humble, those struggling to live, is it not in itself as exalted as any other, wherever we may look for it? Does it not contain the essence of the apostle's life, that true force which appeals to those generous natures, who are animated by the feeling of self-sacrifice for their fellows? The thought of doing good to those about us, to enlighten the intelligence of our brother sojourners in this world is one of the noblest to be felt, and at the same time it has always been the one most fertile in great self-devotion.

In closing my remarks, I have to ask your forgiveness for the length of their detail. Above all I have spoken here of my fellow countrymen speaking the French language who do not closely follow the development in education of the English universities, and it appears to me that it conveys a lesson, or rather an example by which we would do well to profit.

This question of the diffusion of intellectual attainments ought to interest to the highest degree the governing classes of our country, for upon it our future depends. We have already done a great deal, but the work yet to be accomplished in this direction will always be greatly in advance of what has already been effected. It is a common duty to avail ourselves of all the means within our reach to promote this great cause of education in every class.

Are we then to say that it is a duty on our part, following the example of Great Britain and the United States, to organ-

ize these university lectures for those living in the outer world? It appears to me that we could do well to imitate them. The fruits which have resulted elsewhere we may hope to attain here ; and as we risk nothing, I do not see what should hinder us from making a trial of the experiment.

As to the money which is necessary, it will perhaps not be difficult to be found. The Government would not draw back before this good work ; and it appears to me that above all in Montreal, in that city so rich and so generous towards its universities, where matters are so royally determined, this question of dollars would be merely one of detail.

In the course of this paper, I promised a statue to be he who he may, who with the pupils of our colleges would create a deep and permanent love for the classic authors they read. Let us in this matter promise two statues to whomsoever will inaugurate the system of university lectures, the plan of which I have submitted to you.

As to the part which the Royal Society would take in this movement, it would perhaps not be so eclipsed, as many at the first idea may think. Who can say for instance, if the Society could not form from among its members the central committee of organization which would furnish the common point of departure, the motive power of the mechanism by which university extension would be established? It would be another opportunity to fulfil the mission which the founders of the Society have entrusted to it, and at the same time permit me to add an additional claim to the gratitude of the inhabitants of Canada.

THE END.

